

# SUPERFUND

## Fact Sheet

CLEANCARE  
Tacoma, Washington



U S ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY REGION 10

March 2000

### Drummed Wastes Removed From Site

EPA has been working on this site since December 1999 to manage on-site stormwater after CleanCare closed its doors for business on November 19, 1999. Major removal activities began during January 2000 to address approximately 1,600,000 gallons of wastes left on the site. As part of this removal action, EPA identified approximately 3,500 drums that contained waste. During January and February, the drums of hazardous materials and other wastes were sorted by company. Using CleanCare's inventory system, EPA sent letters to the companies that had 250 gallons or more still remaining at the site, giving them the opportunity to arrange for other disposal of their drums.

On February 22, 2000, company representatives came to the site to review paperwork, inspect the drums, and confirm the drums belonged to them. Areas of the site were cleared to provide a safe working area for paperwork review. When the company representatives went to examine their drums, they were escorted to ensure that they remained in safe areas of the site.



*Examining Drummed Wastes*

Once the companies confirmed that the drums were theirs, arrangements were made for them to be picked up by a disposal company between February 28th and March 10th. EPA assisted the companies by placing the drums on pallets and loading the trucks. Approximately 500 drums and containers were removed by 60 companies.

### Sampling and Sorting Remaining Drums

Approximately 3,000 drums still remain on-site. When the drum is unmarked, EPA is sampling to identify the contents. These drums are then sorted by hazard category (i.e. flammable liquids, corrosive liquids, poisonous liquids) until they can be disposed of off site. It is very important that drums containing materials that could react with other chemicals are not stored side-by-side.

Where there are a lot of drums containing the same hazardous waste, the drums are emptied into a temporary storage tank prior to being shipped off site for disposal. This is called "bulking". It reduces the disposal costs when large quantities are handled at one time.

These contents of the tanks are pumped into tank trucks. As soon as they are full, they are sent off site for proper disposal of the hazardous waste. This work will continue until all the drums are emptied.

### Waste Water Treatment System Continues to Operate

The on-site waste water treatment system continues to operate. This system treats surface water which accumulates on the site from rain. Because the groundwater in the area is very high, rain can not sink into the soils at the site causing water to stay on the surface. Hoses and pumps collect water from around the site and route it to the treatment system. Once the water is treated it is discharged into the City of Tacoma sewer treatment system. This on-site system will continue to run until the end of project. In addition the treatment system helped reduce the 480,000 gallon back log of wastewater stored on site by CleanCare after their spill in May 1999. The majority of the wastewater, however, was sent off in tank trucks to other companies for treatment and disposal.



*Hoses and pumps collect water from around the site and route it to the treatment system*



*Sampling the tanks*

### Tank Farm #1 Being Investigated

Tank Farm #1 contains four large tanks that contain distinct layers of oil, sludge and water. The amount of material in each tank varies and the sludge at

the bottom of each tank ranges from ten inches to two feet. Tank #1, the largest in this tank farm, contains approximately 450,000 gallons of waste oils and water. To empty this tank, it will take approximately 80 vacuum tank trucks, each holding about 5,000 gallons. The waste products in the tanks are taken off-site for disposal or recycling. Emptying these tanks will continue over the next month.



## Are You Interested in Talking with EPA?

EPA is interested in meeting and talking with individuals about this removal action. Interviewing citizens helps EPA ensure that any concerns and issues you may have about the removal action are heard. It will also help us develop our CleanCare Community Involvement Plan which describes how EPA will keep the community up-to-date on site activities. If you are interested in talking with us, please call Jeanne O'Dell, EPA's Community Involvement Coordinator, toll free at 1-800-424-4372, extension 6919 to arrange an appointment at your convenience. Please call by April 14th.

## Site History

This site has been an industrial site since 1926. There have been several owners of the property who have used the site for disposal of chemical wastes, auto fluff (shredded pieces of automobile parts) and sludge. In 1975, a small tank farm was built on the property and it became a chemical and petroleum recycling facility in the late 1970s. From 1974-1999, businesses under several different names, including CleanCare, have operated the site as a chemical, solvent and petroleum recycling facility.

In 1992, CleanCare began the process of obtaining a final permit to operate a treatment, storage, disposal and recycling facility under the

Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA). CleanCare handled regulated hazardous wastes, waste and used oil, antifreeze, used solvents, paint wastes, and crushed oil filters.

The final application was submitted to Ecology in 1994. From 1994-1999, Ecology had sent letters to CleanCare notifying them that its permit application still contained serious problems which prevented Ecology from approving the final application.

Over the years, some of the companies operating at the site have had a number of serious problems with handling and disposal of hazardous waste. The most recent occurred on March 26, 1999. Approximately 1,000 to 2,000 gallons of oily waste spilled into the on-site storm drains. The wastes flowed off-site into the Lincoln Avenue ditch and followed the storm drain into the Blair Waterway. To prevent further off-site releases, the storm drains were blocked off.

Ecology inspected the site several times during 1998 and 1999 and found many violations. In July 1999, Ecology issued a \$486,000 penalty against CleanCare. In August 1999, CleanCare advised Ecology that it would close the business and they stopped taking some waste material. On November 17, 1999, CleanCare closed its doors. CleanCare is providing site access and historical knowledge of site activities to EPA to help with the current response actions at the site.

## For More Information:

Please contact **Michael Szerlog**, EPA On-Scene Coordinator at 206-553-0279 or **Jeanne O'Dell**, Community Involvement Coordinator at 206-553-6919 or toll free at 1-800-424-4372.

The Administrative Record for this removal action is at the following locations:

Tacoma Main Public Library  
Northwest Room  
1102 Tacoma Avenue South  
Tacoma, WA

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 6th Ave.  
7th Floor Records Center  
Seattle, WA

A file on this project can also be found at:

Citizens for a Healthy Bay  
917 Pacific Avenue, Suite 406  
Tacoma, WA

## Find Us on the Web NOW!

Information on this project, will be posted on the EPA Region 10's website at <http://epainotes1.rtpnc.epa.gov:7777/R10/CLEANUP.NSF/sites/CleanCare> or <http://www.epa.gov/r10earth>, then "click" on "index", "click on "C" for CleanCare.

*To ensure effective communication with everyone, additional services can be made available to persons with disabilities by contacting one of the numbers above.*



United States  
Environmental Protection  
Agency

Region 10 (ECO-081)  
1200 Sixth Avenue  
Seattle WA 98101

BULK RATE  
POSTAGE & FEES PAID  
U.S. EPA  
Permit No. G-35

**SUPERFUND FACT SHEET**  
**CLEANCARE REMOVAL**  
*Tacoma, Washington*